

A decorative border with intricate floral and scrollwork patterns, rendered in a dark gray color, framing the central text.

**curse me good**

**queenjameskirk**

## curse me good by queenjameskirk

**Category:** IT (2017), IT - Stephen King

**Genre:** Ficlet, Smoking, bill denbrough loves his friends even if he punches them, slight Reddie

**Language:** English

**Characters:** Eddie Kaspbrak, Richie Tozier

**Status:** Completed

**Published:** 2017-10-19

**Updated:** 2017-10-19

**Packaged:** 2020-01-27 11:33:28

**Rating:** Teen And Up Audiences

**Warnings:** Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings

**Chapters:** 1

**Words:** 1,938

**Publisher:** archiveofourown.org

**Summary:**

Richie chain smokes when he's nervous.

Or, Eddie finds Richie after getting his broken arm fixed and Richie realizes just how colossally he's fucked up.

## curse me good

### Author's Note:

richie is a dumbass and eddie is wise!

*and if you wanna cry about something  
i'll give you something worth crying for  
and if you need to curse my name  
curse me good*

*-curse me good, the heavy*

Richie chain-smokes when he's nervous. He also does it when he's angry and when he wants to relax and sometimes when he's happy. He sits on his back porch and burns through an entire pack of cigarettes, breathing out smoke into the air and watching the wind rustle the grass. Richie spends a lot of his allowance on smokes.

That's how Eddie finds him that afternoon, the day he gets in the fight with Bill. Eddie doesn't know about the fight, wasn't there to watch his two best friends spit venom at each other. He didn't see Bill's face when he reared back and punched Richie in the nose, cracking his glasses. He didn't get to hear Richie taunt Bill, doing what he does best to egg Bill into a blind rage. He didn't see the harsh smile on Richie's face as he'd needled into every one of Bill's weak points with savage skill. He didn't see Bill's face get redder and redder, spit flying out of his mouth as he'd tried to fight past the stutter.

No, Eddie had been in the hospital. He'd been in surgery, getting his arm put back together while the rest of the Losers fractured apart.

Richie is sitting on the corner of the porch, legs dangling over the side. He looks up when he hears someone approaching and almost goes to hide the ashtray full of cigarette butts, but then decides he doesn't want to go through the effort of lying. Let whoever it is judge him, he doesn't care anymore.

"Those are gonna fucking kill you some day," Eddie says as he steps out onto the porch. Richie almost smiles at his friend's voice, but then he remembers the afternoon. He turns around. Eddie has changed clothes, out of his dirty and blood-stained polo. His hair is still wet from the shower Richie assumes he took, sticking to the back of his neck. The kid never could stand being dirty for more than an hour, Richie reasons.

His cast is blindingly white, so big on Eddie's thin arm and Richie flinches, assaulted with guilt. He's full of it, shame that he couldn't keep Eddie from getting hurt; couldn't protect him from It. He wishes desperately that it had been him— him who Pennywise had gotten alone, him who had fallen through the splintered wood floor. He wonders if Eddie hates him for it, just a little bit; if he despises him and Bill for letting It get between them. "Is that what you want?" Eddie finishes, bringing Richie back to earth. He's joking, but it hits a little too close to him for Richie to shrug off.

Instead, Richie deflects, blowing smoke into Eddie's face just to watch him wrinkle his nose. He does, glaring at Richie with those brown eyes, and then sits down next to him on the edge of the porch, short legs swinging back and forth over the edge of the porch. There's a scrape on his knee, clean but new, shiny with fresh tissue. Richie wants to pick at it; pull at the scab until it bleeds all over Eddie's white socks. He takes a drag of his smoke to stop himself.

"What'd I miss?" Eddie asks, running a hand over his cast. Richie

stubs out his cigarette into the full ashtray, letting the embers burn his fingertips just a little bit, and sighs.

“Bill’s a dick,” Richie says and taps another cigarette out of his carton of Winstons. It’s the last one and he frowns as he flicks his zippo open. He sticks the cigarette in his mouth and lights it, breathing in and watching the cherry ignite. He catches Eddie watching and he makes a show out of breathing the smoke in deep and letting it drift out of his mouth lazily. Eddie isn’t impressed. “A bigger dick than I have, which you know is saying a lot,” he jokes, attempting a wink. It falls flat.

“What’d you do, Rich?” Eddie asks, seeing right through Richie in the way no one else can. It’s like Eddie can look past every act of bravado, every stupid joke, and see into Richie’s core. It scares him, to think that Eddie knows all the dark and messy parts of him. Eddie understands him better than he understands himself sometimes.

“He started it,” Richie begins and Eddie blows air out of his nose in annoyance. “Really, he did!” Richie says. He’s getting angry now, agitated at the memory of watching Eddie’s mom drag him away and Bill immediately making plans to go back. Like Eddie didn’t almost just fucking die in that crack house. “He wanted to go back,” Richie spits out, taking the cigarette out of his mouth. “He wanted to go back to fucking Neibolt and face that fucking clown again,”

“Richie,” Eddie starts but Richie interrupts him.

“You almost died! Ben got sliced and diced! We all could have died in there and *no one would have known!*” He’s really worked up now, gesturing through the air with his cigarette wildly. “We’d have been just another group of missing kids from this fucking hellhole,”

“Stop,” Eddie says and Richie watches his chest heave up and down but he can’t bring himself to be concerned that Eddie’s having an asthma attack. He keeps talking, his mouth a runaway train about to crash and burn.

“What if It had gotten you? What if we hadn’t gotten to you in time and It had fuckin’ killed you, Eds?” Richie feels a tear run down his cheek and he wipes it away angrily, almost lighting his hair on fire with the cigarette. He stares at his shoes. “Do you know what that’d do to me?” His voice cracks a little bit and he’s crying for real now, tears blurring his vision and streaking his glasses. He angles away from Eddie, hunching his shoulders in, and tries to quell his crying by pressing his face hard into his own shoulder. He tries to disappear.

“It would hurt Bill too,” Eddie says quietly. When Richie looks up, Eddie’s eyes are red and his nose is running. “He loves me, and he loves you too. It would kill him to lose any of us,” Eddie’s eyes are serious, looking too big for his face, and Richie feels a compelling want to hug him. He hasn’t properly hugged Eddie in a long time, sneakily stealing physical contact when jokingly hanging onto Eddie during scary movies and jumping on his back to demand piggy back rides. Suddenly, he really just wants to be held by his friend. “Bill loves you,” Eddie repeats and Richie feels the words sink into him, settling under his skin like a spine-tingling itch.

Now, when Richie thinks back to their fight, he can see the tears in Bill’s eyes. He had overlooked them before, chalking it up to pain over the memory of Georgie or perhaps the realization of his failure. But now he wonders if it was sadness, pain over losing his friends to It. Bill was crying when he punched Richie, looking like he’d never felt so betrayed in his life.

He wonders if Bill is as scared as he is, constantly at the edges of a panic attack. If Bill wakes up screaming in the middle of the night, terrified and alone in his dark bed. If Bill's mind races with every mistake they've made, every bad decision that's led to someone getting hurt or killed.

And then Richie realizes.

Bill already lost Georgie.

Bill's been through this all before, way before Richie had even contemplated the thought of losing a friend. Bill lost his fucking *brother*. He lost his favorite person in the whole world, the kid who drove him crazy and who cheered him up on bad days. Everything Richie's feeling, every sharp pain in his chest and dull ache between his ribs, Bill is feeling times a thousand. Because no matter how much he denies it, Richie knows Bill knows Georgie is dead. He knows that the moment Georgie went missing on that cold October day, he was as good as dead. It doesn't leave survivors.

Richie thinks he would die from that kind of pain. It would consume him and he'd go crazy.

But Bill's still alive. He's still fighting— and if he's going down, he's going down kicking and fucking screaming.

He thinks about Bill on the front porch of Neibolt, splattering his soul out in front of them, no worries of the way they'd react because they were his friends and he trusted them. And Richie had used that trust against him, spitting Bill's pain back into his face. He'd been savage,

picking apart every ounce of faith Bill had put into him.

Richie Tozier feels like a complete dick.

“He doesn’t love me anymore,” he starts and interrupts when Eddie tries to argue. He spins and looks Eddie straight in the eyes. “Where’d you think I got this black eye? It?” he asks, gesturing to his face. “Big Bill got in a fuckin *good* one, Eds,”

Eddie stares at him, silent, for a long time. His gaze is hot on Richie’s face and he wants to shrink away from it, hiding his bruised eye and split lip behind bad jokes and deflections. But Eddie looks serious, his eyebrows drawn together in concentration. Just when Richie is about to ask him what the fuck is up, he purses his lips and makes a small hum in the back of his throat.

“I think you should apologize,” Eddie says finally. He leans over and plucks the half-finished cigarette out of Richie’s hand, ash falling off the end, and flicks it out into the yard. “Bill would forgive you, you know he would,”

“I don’t deserve forgiveness,” Richie replies. The sad thing is that Richie knows Bill would forgive him, would pull him back into his life without a second thought. But there would always be this part of Richie, a tiny needling part of him, that would believe Bill’s still disappointed in him. And it’s the disappointment that hurts worst. Richie’s been pissing people off since the day he was born. He can handle anger and sadness like a pro, but knowing that Bill expected better, trusting Richie to do the right thing over and over, and Richie letting him down with a second thought hurts way worse than a



broken arm.

“Don’t you have somewhere to be, Eds?” Richie sighs, suddenly feeling very tired. The terror of the day has caught up to him and all he wants to do is lay down and fall asleep for a year.

Eddie shakes his head and stands, awkwardly balancing on his left arm while he gets his feet under him. When he’s at his full height, he looks down at Richie and sighs. His eyes are sympathetic but his mouth is frowning.

“Beep beep, Tozier,” he says bitchily and Richie smiles. He knows Eddie isn’t mad at him. Disappointed, maybe, like Bill. A little sad, too, but never angry. “Fix it,” he stalks down the side stairs and rounds the side of house instead of going back through the kitchen door. Richie watches his retreat, grinning at the way he reaches for the gate with his broken arm and sighs before opening it with his left.

“Love you too, Eds!” Richie calls after him. Eddie doesn’t dignify it with a response.

### **Author's Note:**

come visit me on tumblr @cryingbilldenbrough to get updates on future fics!